

*Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park
Park Advisory Commission Meeting*

July 20, 2006

Middletown Town Hall
Middletown, Virginia

- I) General Introductions
- II) Review and Approval of Minutes from 18 May 2006 (10 minutes)
- III) GMP Status Update (20 minutes)
- IV) GMP Scoping; presentation and discussion – Michael Clarke, Wallace Roberts & Todd (90 minutes)
- V) Old Business
 - Bylaws update
 - Park Advisory Commission appointments
- VI) New Business
- VII) Elections in September
- VIII) Meetings after July – handout
- IX) Next Meeting – 21 September 2006 in Front Royal; discuss GMP alternatives

Meeting Notes

Commission members in attendance: Diann Jacox, Designated Federal Official (DFO); Kris Tierney, Vice Chair; Elizabeth McClung; Howard Kittell; Gene Dicks; Jim Smalls; Randolph Jones; Patrick Farris; Fred Andreae; Dan Stickley

Commission members absent: Roy Downey; Richard Kleese; Gary Rinkerman; Mary Bowser

Others in attendance: Chris Stubbs, NPS; Sarah Reid, Winchester Star; Nora Amos, Town of Strasburg; Michael Clarke, WRT; Larry Hamilton, Preserve Frederick; Julie Clevenger, Preserve Frederick; Sue Renaud, NPS; David Myers, Civil War Preservation Trust; Becky Krystal, Northern Virginia Daily

Vice Chairman Kris Tierney chaired the meeting.

The notes from the 18 May 2006 meeting were reviewed and approved as written.

Mr. Chris Stubbs of the National Park Service provided a general management plan status update to the Commission, the details of which were handed out to the Commissioners and the public.

There was a presentation from Mr. Michael Clarke from the consulting firm Wallace

Roberts & Todd on GMP scoping results. A summary of this presentation and the discussion that occurred during the presentation are appended to these commission notes.

There was a report on the draft by-laws. Mr. Stubbs stated that the Dept. of Interior Solicitor's office is concerned about the length and complexity of the draft bylaws, and also concerned about the duplication of some articles in the bylaws with other NPS laws or regulations. Mr. Stubbs stated that the Park office is urging the Dept. Solicitor's office to provide their comments on the bylaws in writing, or send somebody to the next commission meeting to discuss bylaws with the group.

There was a discussion of the Commission appointments. Five Commissioners terms have expired, and NPS has only received a nomination letter on one of these appointments (Middletown). The others – Strasburg, State of VA, Frederick County, and Shenandoah County – are encouraged to submit their nominations in writing.

There was a discussion of the meetings that would occur after the July Commission meeting, and the schedule was handed out.

Election for the upcoming Chair will be held during the September 21 Commission meeting. It was agreed that this would be handled as it was last year: nominations will be submitted to Mr. Stubbs before the September meeting, and an anonymous vote will be held during the meeting.

The next meeting will be on September 21, 2006 at the Warren Co. Government Center in Front Royal, VA.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Chairman Tierney.

List of handouts provided at 20 July 2006 meeting

1. Meeting agenda
2. Minutes from 18 May 2006 Commission meeting
3. GMP status update
4. Meeting schedule for the next year

Appendix I – Scoping Presentation and Discussion

First there was a general discussion of the NPS scoping meetings in June. It was felt that there was momentum generated about the park – we must keep that momentum going. It was also pointed out that many Warren County residents attended the Middletown meeting. There was also a feeling that NPS should get the press to publish the scoping results, and we need to publish the results as widely as possible (e.g., news release, web site, etc.). There was also a sentiment that NPS should follow up with a scoping meeting that is targeted only at landowners within the park, where we provide information to them on their options and answer their questions.

Michael Clarke of WRT presented the 26 major issues that have surfaced during the scoping process. They are listed below, including the major points about each that were discussed by the Commissioners. Some of the major issues were not discussed by the Commissioners due to time constraints.

1. We will have a mix of public, non-profit, and private lands in the park.
 - This is viewed by the Commission as a fact --- how to deal with this reality?
 - Do different levels of land ownership constitute different planning alternatives?
2. We are losing the historic town and countryside landscape.
 - This is one of the reasons why the park was created when it was created – a very important function of the park and the partnership is to combat suburban sprawl.
 - We need a long term strategy for dealing with this.
 - We must consider easements as a tool for combating sprawl.
3. Park viewsheds must be protected.
4. Land protection is critically important.
5. We must be sensitive to the Park's impact on private property owners.
 - The plan must show some respect for what property owners want, especially regarding park visitors.
6. We must distinguish the park from the National Historic District.
 - It's more important to explain the relationship than to distinguish one from the other.
 - We must be able to describe all the relationships among the partners in the GMP.
 - The partners are not just partnering with the NPS, but with each other as well.
 - The Park must maintain the ability to set its priorities with respect to providing technical assistance to the Heritage Area.
7. The Park must develop its own branding.
8. The full story must include the towns.
9. How can visitors best experience the park?
10. We must convey the significance of the Valley Pike.
11. Can the local roads handle the visitor traffic?
12. Does the park need a public transportation system?
13. We must preserve the Park's significant historic sites.
14. How can we get people to understand what Early and Sheridan were thinking?
15. Will we be able to relate visitors to historically accurate landscapes?
16. The Park's trail system should follow historic roads.
17. Visitors should begin their experience at a new visitor center.
18. Visitors should have a coordinated interpretive experience.
19. The Park should be explored by walking and biking trails.
20. The Park should recognize its significant natural resources.
21. Visitor safety must be considered.
22. The towns have an opportunity to become gateways to the park.
23. Visitors should become aware of interpretive enclaves outside the park.

24. The park should relate to other significant resources in the area.
25. The park needs to develop the capability to accommodate reenactments.
26. A management structure is needed to address the mutual interests of NPS and its partners.